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German possessions in the Pacific, excepting the Marshall and Salomo islands. He tells how these islands, widely scattered through Polynesia, Melanesia and Micronesia, came into the possession of Germany; describes their broader aspects in respect of geologic formation, climate, and plant and animal life, and then writes in considerable detail of each of the possessions. The descriptions are clear, comprehensive, and accurate, and lose no value from the fact that they were written for the general public. The photographs are interesting and instructive, the map is helpful, and the index renders it easy to use the work as a book of reference—and it is worthy of such use.

Yearbook of the United States Department of Agriculture, 1902. Washington, D. C., 1903.

The Bureau of Soils of the Agricultural Department has a force of over 100 men engaged in soil surveys in various parts of the country. Their work throws light upon the nature and distribution of our soils and their possibilities. The area surveyed and mapped in the fiscal year 1901-02 was 14,541 square miles, making a total up to that time of 22,623 square miles, or 14,478,720 acres. The soil maps covering this area are on a scale of 1 mile to an inch, and have been published or are ready for publication. The largest areas thus far covered by the soil surveys are: California, 2,154 square miles; Maryland, 2,180 square miles; North Carolina, 3,425 square miles; and Virginia, 1,604 square miles. The surveys are a valuable contribution to economic geography. As an example of their benefits, they have distinctly suggested, in Prince George, St. Mary, and Calvert counties, Md., the specialization of certain crops in the line of fruit-growing, trucking and general farming and dairying. The work of the Experiment Stations includes studies of climatic and weather conditions as related to plant growth; and the Department of Agriculture has introduced many new variations of crops, such as the Manshury barley, which has increased the yield of barley over a wide region; Kafir corn, introduced in 1886 as a crop for regions of scanty rainfall, the Kansas crop alone in 1899 being valued at over \$6,000,000; macaroni wheats that bid fair to supply all our macaroni in a few years; Turkestan alfalfa, Sumatra tobacco, Egyptian cotton, and many other crops that are now successfully growing in this country.

Besides all the information which the *Year Book* brings annually to the farmers of this country it is a valuable source of reference for matters relating to economic and commercial geography.